

# The Spokesman

## WEEKLY

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## New Tirade Against Anandpur Sahib Resolution Lacks Conviction

### Rajiv Gandhi's Hypocritical Stand On Separation Of Religion And Politics

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's clamour about separating religion from politics has a farcical crust and his pretensions to secularism are just skindieep.

Evidence to these effects has been mounting over the past few months as Lok Sabha elections are drawing near. In order to woo Hindu voters, he has been resorting to so many gimmicks.

Last week he visited Joshimath in northern Uttar Pradesh in connection with a function arranged to celebrate Adi Sankara's consecration of this centre of Hindu renaissance about 1,200 years ago. After paying his obeisance at the holy shrine, Mr

Gandhi addressed the congregation. After paying tribute to the renowned reformer, Mr Gandhi made a fervent appeal to keep religion separate from politics. But then he himself forgot the golden rule and made a virgolic attack on Anandpur Sahib Re-

solution (ASR). Thus, he utilised a solemn religious gathering to reap a political dividend.

Does not this amount to hypocrisy of the first water?

Or does he want to propound the theory that what is meat for him should be considered as poison for others?

The prime minister's first harangue about keeping religion and politics miles apart was delivered, strangely, from within the holy precincts of Guruvayur Temple in Kerala three years ago. He has kept up the noise ever

since from the pulpits of Hindu temples.

He has also been lecturing on secularism ad nauseum, posing himself as the biggest standard-bearer of this concept.

Secularism, as late President Zakir Husain had explained, does not mean negation or absence of religion. It means equal respect for all religions.

Here also, Mr Gandhi has been the biggest defaulter. He has been visiting Hindu temples very often these days. But he has

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## If Lok Sabha Elections Can Be Held In Punjab, Why Not Assembly Poll?

### Elections To SGPC Will Show Which Akali Faction Hold Sway Over Sikhs

Punjab Governor Ray, despite being a brilliant barrister and an astute politician, has been making one faux pas after another in recent weeks.

He has now given the assurance that elections to Lok Sabha from Punjab would be held simultaneously with the rest of India.

Only a few days earlier he had recommended to the centre that conditions were not conducive to the restoration of popular rule in the state and, as a consequence, parliament approved extension of president's rule for another six months.

If elections can be held for Lok Sabha, why not for state assembly?

Also why not elections for

Sbiramot Gurdwara Prabandha Committee which are overdue by five years and for which all segments of Sikhs have been clamouring all long.

This shows beyond any shadow of doubt that election process is used as a pawn by the ruling Congress (I) to suit its own designs and not as an inescapable constitutional obligation.

It proves that Mr Ray's report about extension of president's rule was not a true portrayal of the actual situation in the state. In other words, he has again proved himself to be a ready tool in the hands of his

masters in New Delhi. In this way, he has done a great disservice to the growth of democratic institutions.

Mr Ray is also keen on completing panchayat elections before September this year, though these will be held districtwise and not in the entire state at one go. These were first slated for February last, then were postponed to May, and are now scheduled to begin in June. Whether the Governor keeps his word or finds another escape route remains to be seen.

For Sikhs, SGPC elections are far more important than assembly poll. Because any party, which controls this supreme religious body, is a hauled as repre-

sentative of Sikh heart. As Sikh politics revolve around gurdwaras, the party controlling SGPC will automatically eclipse all other factions in Akali politics.

Perhaps it would be benefit New Delhi also in one big way. It will have then found the fact on which it can hold confabulations to end the present political impasse in the state. So far it has been taking shelter behind the alibi that there was no Akali leader of sufficient stature and following, with whom it could hold talks.

Elections to Punjab assembly are being put off with stunning regularity because Congress (I) party in the state is in shambles. The Akalis are also sorely divided but then the prospect is that once elections are announced, they would work their differences and come together to give the Congress (I) a good fight and ride to power. And this very spectacle is too frightening for the New Delhi rulers. Hence, their present pastime of humming and hawing behind constitutional ramparts and political phraseology.



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never visited any gurdwara or a mosque or a church. As prime minister, he belongs to people of all faiths and not mere Hindus.

It cannot be that Hindu temples alone are fountainsheads of secularism while places of worship of other faiths 'are breeding grounds for "communalism" and "fundamentalism"'.  
Religion is neither an opium, as Marx opined, nor a poison, as Mr Gandhi makes out. It merely shows path to attainment with the Creator and preaches parity of action and piety of mind. No religion teaches enmity with followers of other faiths. It is the priests and other touts who have brought a bad name to them. The more religious a person is, the more noble and more honest he will be in his mundane dealings.

If true religion is introduced into politics, much of the present fussiness will be a thing of the past.

It was because of this that

## Anandpur Sahib Resolution does not seek anything outside the Indian Union

Mahatma Gandhi would make all his political pronouncements at his evening prayer meeting.

After a lapse of four years, Mr Gandhi has again resurrected the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and has begun to blast it as villain of the piece, bent upon breaking India's unity, integrity and sovereignty. This is exactly what he had done in 1954 during Lok Sabha poll and rode to power. Now when new elections are due in the next few months, he dreams of using the ASR again as a ladder to return to the throne.

But he has thrown into oblivion that on July 24, 1955, when he signed the historic accord with Sant Harbans Singh Longowal, he had agreed to refer this very resolution to Sarkaria commission insofar as centre-state relations

were concerned. And, later, upholding this action in parliament, he had asserted that he saw "nothing wrong with this resolution."

Then how can ASR be bad now all of a sudden which deserves to be subjected to continuous whiplash?

Either Mr Gandhi was blatantly wrong in July 1955 or he is trying to befool the people now. He cannot have it both ways.

Misunderstandings arise because ASR, originally drafted in Punjabi, is badly worded and is full of religious jargons. But then, as Akalis claim, it represents a Magna Carta of Sikhs on political, religious, social, economic and educational aspects of their life. It would be better if it is translated into English and all other Indian languages and distributed throughout the country and abroad, merely to prove that there is nothing "anti-national" in it.

As often stressed, ASR does

not seek anything outside the Indian union. It does ask that the centre retain only defence, external affairs, currency and communications, and pass on all other subjects to the states. But Akalis say that they would be satisfied if all states, and not only Punjab, were given more financial power. At present they cannot open even a primary school or a small dispensary without centre's approval.

The demand for such autonomy has been made by not only all opposition parties but also by some intellectuals in the Congress (I). Even the Sarkaria commission has recommended complete overhaul of centre-state relations.

Mr Gandhi, the sunny side of your tirade against ASR, lies exposed.

## More Rhetoric Than Reality In Congress (I)'s Election Strategy

### Will Opposition Tap Big Reservoir Of Feeling Against Ruling Party?

Indicators of Congress (I)'s propaganda strategy for forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, due in the next few months, are plenty.

Rhetoric flourishes on new panchayati raj system, employment opportunities under Jawahar Karghar Yojna, and extension for another 10 years reservations for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have been supplemented by set-tee-sabtle but conscious endeavours to use the Hindu card in central India and the minority card elsewhere and to do everything possible to destabilise non-Congress (I) ministries in various states. This, Mr Rajiv Gandhi and his coterie of advisers feel, will pave the way for their party's return to power with comparative ease.

The prime minister's newly-found love for rural India is in grisly contrast to his initial obsession with consumerism, economic liberalisation, and hi-tech. It appears that when his standard free market ideas about economic development and social justice did not solve all, or even most of the country's problems, he was forced to look elsewhere.

The new slogans—"maximum democracy," "maximum devolution," "so to power brokers" and "power to the people"—are, indeed, very catchy. Even better than them is the Jawahar Karghar Yojna which will distribute Rs 1,700 crores of taxpayers' money to potential rural voters.

Panchayati raj system has led to the opposition making noises against it. Janta Dal President V.P. Singh dubbed the whole thing as a "hoax". He thinks it is a device to bring in greater centralisation through the back-

door. West Bengal Finance Minister Dasgupta believes the entire object of Congress (I) is to "encroach into states' powers and jurisdiction." Telegu Desam spokesmen feel that the measure is being pushed through with indecent haste. Let the issue be taken to the people for mandate, they say.

Many are convinced that it is Mr Gandhi's desperate bid to ensnare gullible rural voters with the carrots of direct money, new authority and clout, and development plans of their own choice. But it would be a tragedy if grassroots democracy went the way of 21st century dream. May be the euphoria will soon wear off and the overkill will reduce the issue to the law of diminishing returns.

Since Jawaharlal Nehru is being frequently quoted in these heady days, it is pertinent to recall what he said about how a democracy should function. He said: "The fact that one party happens to be in charge of government does not entitle it to any privileges during elections. Ministers should not utilise their official position to further their own election prospects in any way. Whatever the party to which we belong, we should maintain a high level of propriety. It is better to lose an election in the right way than to win it in the wrong way."

Mr Gandhi has been visiting Hindu places of worship and calling on saints, as he would not like to lose the advantage accruing to his party from pro-Hindu tilt. But at the same time, he would like to cling to the minority vote banks which have been helping his party out of the difficulties in the past. Thus, he is skating on thin ice and runs the risk of crashing through it.

The biggest asset is, however, the disunity in opposition ranks. The consolidation, which began with merger of three parties into Janta Dal, and the formation of a bigger combine, National Front, have slowed down because of problems of internal adjustments among leaders. There is also delay in hammering out a cohesive and alternative policy on domestic and foreign issues.

There is a vast reservoir of anti-Congress feeling. Whether the opposition can tap it to its advantage is a big question-mark.

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## A THOUGHT FROM GURBANI

Humility is my scripture  
Those who are humble attain great

—Guru Arjan Dev

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## GREAT CRUSADER

On May 27 falls the 6th death anniversary of Sardar Hukam Singh, founder of the "Spokesman Weekly," a seasoned parliamentarian, and one of the biggest crusaders for Punjab and Sikh causes. His footprints on sands of time will be long cherished by posterity to come. From a comparatively humble beginning, he rose to pinnacle of glory and achievements. As Lok Sabha Speaker, he distinguished himself with rulings which shall stand as monuments of wisdom, scholarship and mastery of parliamentary practices and are bound to be quoted in legislatures of the world. As Rajasthan governor, he endeared himself to the people in all walks of life and in every hamlet, town and city of the state, may they be poor or rich, of high caste or lowly-born, well educated or illiterate.

In politics, Sardar Hukam Singh rose to become president of Shiromani Akali Dal. If Master Tara Singh was uncrowned king of the party, Sardar Sahib was the brain behind the party moves and policies. In pursuing, with devotion and diligence, the Sikh grievances, he never lost sight of injustice being done to Punjab. His proposals were meant to benefit Hindus as much as Sikhs and he firmly believed that both the communities had to swim or sink together. Of course, there were a handful of Arya Samaji leaders who were an incorrigible lot and rabidly anti-Sikh, who first called upon their followers to disown Punjabi language as their mother tongue and then battled against Akali plans to get for Punjab more largescale industries, more water and more power—things which were to open doors of increased prosperity to all Punjabis, irrespective of their religion, caste or creed. Even when he became member of ruling Congress party, he did not give up this crusade. At times he earned the wrath of the rulers of the day but he remained undaunted and fully determined as ever before.

As Sikh viewpoints were being twisted out of form by a few prejudiced vernacular papers of Jullundur, controlled by purblind Hindus of Arya Samaji flock, he decided to launch the Spokesman Weekly so that cases of Sikhs and Punjab could be presented to Indians at large with force, clarity and sustenance. It was mostly due to this new venture that some of the misunderstandings about Sikhs were removed and their grievances and those of Punjab gauged in earnestness and magnitude. This journal has since continued to follow the path laid down by Sardar Sahib.

Nowadays Sikhs face a bleak future. They are despised everywhere, almost branded as "traitors" who are out to dismember the country, though for the protection of its sovereignty and territorial integrity they have made sacrifices much more than any other community. The trade is led by no less a man than Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi himself. At this crucial juncture, we sorely need a man of Sardar Hukam Singh's stature, statesmanship and eminence to salvage the community.

# GURU ARJAN DEV

## The perfect son and the perfect Guru

By : Bhagwant Singh Dabrewari, Tapasree, Amravati

It is a pity that the multifaceted personality of Guru Arjan, even if eulogised, is not understood by his followers.

In my humble view, Guru Arjan laid the foundation stone not only of a sound humanitarian base for continuation of the earlier Gurus' work but also, in self-sacrifice, strengthened the roots of the Word in perpetuity.

It is Guru Arjan's vision which brings out a path for propagating universal truth, the exclusivity and transparent catholicity of which is that the Guru does not divide Truth into Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian Truth. He collects the sayings of the saints of various sects of Hindu religion and also Islam and puts them in one Granth.

The respect and devotion that he pays to the sacred Word is evident when he decides to leave his own bed to sleep on the floor while the *pothi* is installed on his bed. This is just one of the boons that Guru Arjan left us, and this boon, in time of Guru Gobind Singh, becomes our perpetual Guru in the form of Guru Granth Sahib. But let us turn to other facets of the Guru's multi-dimensional life.

It is said that Guru Gobind Singh in paying tribute to earlier Gurus had stated that there was no Guru like Guru Nanak, no disciple like Guru Angad, no *sevadkar* like Guru Amar Das and no son like Guru Arjan.

Indeed the strict obedience to Guru Ram Das in perfect devotion as his disciple and also as his son is remarkable. When both the other sons refuse to obey the Guru to go to Lahore, Arjan readily agrees not only to obey but also accepts the condition that he should not come back until summoned.

Apart from the Guru's own verses exhibiting the torture of separation through letters to his father, Guru Arjan's action is in accordance with the strict discipline of a Guru-Sikh relationship. For example in Anand Sahib, Guru Amar Das lays down :

*Awa sarai piarai akath ai  
Kuru kahani  
Karam kahani akath kari ki  
dhare payle  
Tun man dhan jub sang gurke  
hukam manije payle.*

Arjan is not at all enamoured of the rewards of his devotion; he is rejoicing just in one thing, i.e. obedience.

In the words of Kabir, he would be saying "Charon karam ki manji inhi rahun sarai aur sad" indeed this devotion enticed him to the gaddi of Guru

Ram Das, but this did not make him different from his Sikhs. Even as Guru, he served the sangat from Patnaur in Fifth Sahib as a humble *sevadkar* pressing the tired legs of old people, carrying the luggage of those who could not carry themselves and even offering to look after the shoes of the sangat when it rained on the Guru.

A moment of pride, even for me, as a Sikh today, that my Guru in disguise as a Sikh, served his own followers. Alas today, even a Sikh would not serve his own brother if his station-in-life is low.

Guru Arjan, it seems, laid down in a systematic way what a Sikh should be like and showed himself up as an example of what he had stated in theory.

Sukhmani Sahib fascinates so many non-Sikhs but transports Sadhu Vaswani to an ecstatic state of a high order. Says he "Such love is sung in hymns after hymns of the Sukhmani. Yours have passed away since my heart was knit to this great book. As a lisping child I listened to its simple verse. As a boy, without understanding much, I was strangely moved by its melody. In the growing years of my manhood, I have felt again and again that the Bhagvadgita and the Sukhmani are two of the books which India's young men should study. They may well be read a textbook in higher nationalism. Indeed, some years ago when I was asked to recommend a text book in religion for college students in India, I referred to the Sukhmani as one of the great books for India's young men." (From: *In the Sikh Sanctuary*, 1932).

As if the Guru was writing a charter for his own life-example, particularly *Tera bhana meetha laagya*. He remained in this state through imprisonment, torture and death. Here was a personification of all that was noble. It has often been said that Truth is always tortured, while falsehood is put on the throne, but Truth rejoices in torture, falsehood screams on the throne.

The irony of Jahangir's foolishness is magnified when one knows that the universality of Guru Arjan was not confined only to including the sayings of Hindu and Muslim Saints in the Granth but also included the foundation stone of the Hari Mandir (the Golden Temple) being laid by a Muslim fakir, Hazrat Mian Mir. To a ruler—that too, a bigot dependent upon the dubious help of fanatics—for whom power is the only understanding, truth would not have any appeal but in this case even



the Truth of Islam in Mian Mir could not suppose, in leaving this ruler understood that Guru Arjan was doing what Prophet Mohammed would have been proud of.

When I was nearly twenty years old, I wrote for the *Spokesman*, an article on the basis of one verse of Sukhmani Sahib, which still reminds me of the need to have internal and external purity to be able to claim discipleship of Guru Arjan. The verse was in my mind ever since I was a child but came into bold relief in my mind when an Under Secretary Sardarji told me that no one could find a single lapse in his life in the last twenty years. As a young man of 20 I was flabbergasted. The whole of Guru Granth Sahib—much of which I did not know then—showed our Gurus and Salots talking of themselves in utter humility and I later learnt about specific hymns like "Mere Raam ch neeh katam har mere", "Khatton Jaise khate har, ahi khatian vich payan", "Sab jagat mein gun nahin hai", but at that time I knew from Sukhmani Sahib:

*Apur koi jo soone neecha  
Soo gande sab di vaha*

"When I told Sardar Sahib that as a young man I could not understand his insistence, he did not pay attention. What I had written then on the subject estimated in the following:

"Let us not only praise Guru Gobind Singh. Let us bring him into our lives. Guru Gobind Singh was of course great but we do not become great merely by talking of him. Unless we show the qualities of our Guru in our own life, we have no right to be called great."

That is why Guru Nanak reminds us:

*Bhau bhagat kar-neeh sodae,  
Rau Nanak mukharan paye.*

In paying this tribute to Guru Arjan, I would like to recall, in a moment of childlike innocence, a letter that I wrote in a personal rounder around 35 years ago to Guru Arjan, which began with "My dear Guru Arjan."

I had said—and I say now too—I was fascinated by the life of Guru Arjan. I was deeply touched by his simplicity, by his humility, by his universality, by his various acts of general welfare, his love of the Sikhs and his innumerable qualities. But when he said in his hymns that without God's Name, without God's grace, without the presence of the Lord, he could not do anything I could not understand. But this I do not say now. For I have, through Guru Arjan's grace, since understood what he meant by God's Name, God's grace and God's presence. More than that I have since learnt to have faith in absolute terms in the experiences and sayings of our Masters. In any case, there is no divergence.

Firstly, our Gurus have

emphasised that there is no difference between the Guru and the Almighty but at the same time, our Gurus never wanted to project themselves as God.

Secondly, all our Gurus practised what they preached. They showed us the way to know and believe and behave as if we were not the doers and no credit to this effect should be ascribed. We are mere puppets in the hands of God and are instruments dependent upon His dictates.

Thirdly, we were to obey and act in accordance with the instructions of our Gurus but never claim that we had become something.

Fourthly, the only way to avoid vanity was to surrender everything to the Lord.

Fifthly, only the presence of the Lord in the form of 24-hour recitation of the Lord's Name could keep us protected from the five mighty thieves already in readiness to pounce upon our smallest weakness.

Sixthly, the Gurus wanted us to live as dead persons in life (mar-jeeva) and to involve us in the love of Guru and God to such an extent that we knew that even death cannot kill us.

Seventhly, what was intended was not the external gathering of knowledge or external show of strength but internal change of attitudes, since the Lord's kingdom is within.

Eighthly, Guru Arjan emphasised: *Na ko mera, dushman rehna na ham kisse bulat... Sabke sweet haan apun keena haru sohan ke sohan...* This universal brotherhood had to have one Lord of all to guide us and the Gurus took no credit for what they did.

Ninthly, the Gurus distinctly felt that even for his sacrifice in martyrdom he must not be compensated for he was just obeying the commands of the Lord.

And tenthly, as Guru said in the following hymn, all of us remained beholden to the Almighty for whatever we could achieve with His grace:

*Tera kaeta jania manix maine  
- jox kzeinhee  
Mela nigunharz ko gun nahin  
dope taraj playe  
Tera pya meirekhar ko  
sagur njan milia  
Nanak naam mile tan jeetun  
- tan man thees haria.*

We have forgotten Guru Arjan's commands as symbolised in this hymn. We do not recognise the blessings of the Lord who has made us what we are. We don't recognise that in his mercy, even sinners like us are saved. And only His mercy makes us bloom if our Satguru friend receives us. Our condition would then be like the Gurus—we shall live and bloom only if we had His Name in our hearts.

Can we now re-learn what we have forgotten? *Simar murda bhakia Satgur bhakihinda* (Sing Lord's praises, Satguru is always forgiving)

## Historic Baghdad Gurdwara destroyed on flimsy grounds

### Intervention at highest level by the Indian government can save the situation

By : Our special correspondent

An inscription in classical Turkish recording the visit of Guru Nanak to Baghdad and dated 927 Hijri (1520-21) was discovered in 1917 by Sikh soldiers operating in Mesopotamia during the First world war. Guru Nanak had visited the site in 1520 and stayed for 4 months. He had held discussions with Pir Bahlol Dargah or his successors. The Gurdwara site is amidst ancient graveyard, which contains graves/museums of Munawar al Hallaj, Sheikh Junaidi Al Baghdadi, Pir Bahlol Dargah and other leading Sufis, besides that of Jewish Prophet Joshua which has common walls with the Sikh shrine.

An Indian Muslim from Lahore Syed Sharif Hussain who had gone to Iraq in connection with pilgrimage and business, contributed for the construction of the sanctum sanctorum in the later part of 1918. Since then visitors from India have helped the shrine's renovation and expansion through donations.

Guru Nanak's visit forms part of Baghdad folklore. He was believed to have raised a pedestal and started preaching. He also performed a lot of miracles, which had support from Bhai Gurdas's writings. He had also blessed the then Governor's wife with a son, and had been offered a Chola, cloak with Quranic verses on it. This Chola is still in Gurdwara at Dera Baba Nanak.

A regular Gurdwara came into being at the site during the second world war, thanks to the efforts of Sikh soldiers. They constructed a room covering the site of the inscription, a room covering the mausoleum of Pir Bahlol Dargah, and a huge courtyard with high walls with a small entrance. There were two inscriptions, one in brass giving the names of Sikh soldiers with amount of their donations and dated 1942. The other was in Panjabi commemorating the donation by Second Sikh Engineers and dated 1st April 1943.

During mid 60s, the visit of Sardar Swarn Singh, then India's Defence Minister, had made the Iraqi government to adopt a liberal attitude and permit the entry of pilgrims liberally. During 1980-82, the Continental Construction, New Delhi constructed an outer boundary encompassing

another 3000 yards to the Gurdwara, and constructed a *farm khana*, hall for langar, huge store for langar and a room for office.

Weekly *Diwans* were held at the site every Friday where about 500 pilgrims from the subcontinent, and also local Iraqis partook food. The number went up to 3000 during *Unisakhi*, Guru Nanak's birthday and other such celebrations. The Gurdwara served as a site for social get-together of the Indian community, and provided the forum for social intercourse and good food to the numerous labourers working at construction sites in Iraq.

The Government of Iraq in March 1969 struck unexpectedly, and took possession of the Gurdwara on the spurious plea that 1980-82 extension had caused certain graves to be levelled. The Iraqi Minister for Religious Affairs, Mr. Abdulla Fazi told India's Ambassador to Iraq and President of the Gurdwara of the Iraqi government's decision. The Ambassador's efforts proved of no avail. The Iraqi authorities proceeded with destruction, and have not only destroyed the 1980-82 construction, but also parts of 1942-43 construction. The brass plaque and the stone inscription recording donations by Sikh soldiers have been removed by Iraqi authorities, and only a circuitous narrow passage left to the main room which at the moment is still intact. The travellers who came from Iraq recently revealed these pathetic tales and their woes. The Indian community which consists of contractors doing work on Iraq projects are in no position to resist the Iraqi designs.

Government of Iraq claims to be socialist and secular. It is believed to have a lot of friendship with India. Only in February 1969 President Saddam Hussein extended invitation to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to visit Iraq. Only intervention at highest level by the Government of India can save the situation. The outer courtyard has now been separated from the graveyard by a huge wall and can very well be allowed to serve as meeting ground for the Indian community, at least on special occasions, like *Banakh*, Guru Nanak's birthday and other such occasions.



# Punjab problem ignored for poll gains

By : Captain Amarinder Singh

When Governments use national problems for political gains, then apart from the moral aspect, which even though irrelevant in the India of today, becomes an issue that must be debated and projected, if the people are concerned to keep intact the democratic fabric of the country.

If political expediency requires the use of a people or community to create electoral issues, or for the whitewashing of embarrassments, and the country turns a blind eye, then it is a question of time before other minorities will be exploited in the same manner to satisfy the needs of the larger majority. And that will be the final nail in the coffin of the democratic and secular deals on which our founding fathers had based the Constitution.

The larger conspiracy theory, the projection of the Anandpur Sahib resolution once again, are indicative of the future designs of the ruling party, and the course its electoral battle is likely to take. The Sikhs are to be the whipping boys.

What impact the larger conspiracy is to have on Punjab and

party's survival is ensured - on the fortunes and future of a people.

In 1984, Operation Bluestar and the stories that went with it, made military intervention an acceptable solution to all but the Sikhs, the devastation in Delhi at the time of Indira Gandhi's assassination, brought forth a cry of protest in our support, as what happened was visible to all. Today the fact that Punjab is reeling under state oppression is not visible to the country to come out in our support, as the powerful media of TV and Radio, and papers subservient to the powers, make sure of that. This doesn't, however, mean that every Sikh in Punjab does not have a heavy load.

Information reeled off by the Governor S.S. Ray at a press conference the other day to prove his point of an improvement in the overall situation, have no relevance to what is happening on the ground. Both State and other terrorism is on the increase, and if as he says, 60 per cent of Punjab has not experienced violence and yet the killings are on increase, it simply means that the situation in the rest of the 40 per

cent of Punjab is worse or his time before these peaceful areas dwindle further. What does matter today is whether the feeling of alienation is increasing. If not, the law and order situation will deteriorate, and this is where Punjab seems to be heading.

Larger scale Sikh alienation started after Operation Bluestar, increased further at the time of the Delhi massacre and state terrorism in the state, and the more the government relies on its security apparatus the more the alienation will be.

A sympathetic understanding and a will to resolve the problems in the state is what is required - for that this government does not have the inclination, will or ability. The receiving to Punjab's problem means, the government will have to do it at the expense of states in the "Hindi belt", which is the life support of the Congress party. Hence Governor Ray's admission that nothing can be done till the next election - if Punjab has to suffer for the next six months, so be it, but we have heard this refrain before the last election as well - what happens in the early 1990's if the Congress party remains, therefore, in any case's plans.

The present feeling, and the massive publicity the government is going to extract from the larger conspiracy trial to enable it to mobilise the people of the Hindi belt, is going to push Punjab in the opposite direction. Extremist organisations will gain sympathisers, active or otherwise, and once again, the unbreakable bond between our two major communities is going to be tested. In the rest of the country, Sikh alienation is likely to accentuate and affect the security of our people, their businesses, employment

avenues, and livelihood in general.

The Sikhs have proved their loyalty to the country on innumerable occasions. We have worked, fed and died for it happily when called upon to do so as there is no greater honour than this. And I find it preposterous that we are being asked to prove our bonafides or profess loyalty every second day, or that our sentiments are played with, when it suits to parties and governments.

The 'larger conspiracy' theory has no precedence in the annals of judicial history in a democratic country. A trial is held continuously for four years, the accused and an accomplice are found guilty and executed. The SIT report prepared before the trial is over, is not considered relevant enough by the prosecution to include as evidence, neither are the two Bombay professors considered important enough to be held, and are released after questioning.

When the trial is over and the execution carried out, another trial is considered necessary on information which was available while the first trial was on. And this because Simranjit Singh Mann and others must be used to ensure the Congress party's success at the polls - and to cover up for the embarrassment caused to the ruling party by the Thakker report leakage. This is slant on our judicial process, and a charade that makes a mockery of our democratic system.

Fortunately, a democratic system still functions in this country and public opinion still matters, particularly in an election year. I hope therefore that this objective opinion, however small, will express its outrage at these designs. If not, then it belongs to mind a story of a dispossessed German after World War II, who said that in the heyday of the Nazi regime, he never spoke out when the communists were being persecuted because he wasn't a communist. Once again he never stood up for the Jews, when the pogroms were on, as he wasn't a Jew. When eventually he was arrested and imprisoned for being anti-Nazi, no one came to his assistance, simply because there was no one left to do so.

History teaches us lessons. I hope the past, and for us the post-44 series of events, have shown the way we are heading. We want our country united and strong but the question is whether the Congress Party wants it or not?

**The larger conspiracy theory, the projection of the Anandpur Sahib resolution once again, are indicative of the future designs of the ruling party, and the course its electoral battle is likely to take. The Sikhs are to be the whipping boys.**

the country doesn't seem to be an issue. The fact that anger and bitterness is going to negate any improvement that may have come about doesn't seem to matter. The fact that violence may erupt and harming the interests of four million Sikhs who reside in other states of the country seems an acceptable risk.

The fact that larger scale unrest, unlike before, could affect the food production capability of Punjab, thereby denying India its much needed food reserves, that have today all but disappeared, seems acceptable too. And finally the demoralisation of over 1,00,000 Sikh soldiers and officers of our army, who cannot remain isolated from the events engulfing their community, seems a price the ruling party is willing to pay for ensuring its survival.

In a democracy, the political future of a party is primary. Any tactic in a desperate situation is totally acceptable, even if some are considered undesirable, as sometimes desperate situations require desperate solutions. But there is no precedent in a democracy, when people are made political pawns, and a political

factor are not coerced. Statistics released by him prove my point. Total killings, including those of security personnel in the 18 months prior to his rule were 36 a month, and in the 23 months of his government, the average working comes out to 161 a month. It is also a question of

**AHUJA**

SUITINGS  
SHIRTINGS  
SAREES  
DRESS  
MATERIALS

**AHUJA**  
SILK MILLS





The administration's decision to unveil the larger conspiracy surrounding Mrs Gandhi's assassination has already become the subject of a burgeoning controversy. Many observers question the government's motives, alleging that the episode illustrates more than anything else the administration's panic, its failure to tackle a political crisis that threatens its very existence in power.

Shri M.V. Kamath, a former editor of the "Illustrated Weekly of India", offers his analysis of why the second charge-sheet is a hoax that the Rajiv government has chosen to play on the Indian people.

Let me make three observations immediately. One: Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is in a panic. Two: He is no better, when it comes to it, than his younger brother Sanjay Gandhi. Three: the 'larger conspiracy' theory is an after-thought and hence a hoax on the great Indian public.

Now as the news announces would say, the details.

Let us go back to the pre-Operation Blue Star days when Rajiv Gandhi was describing Bhindranwale as nothing more than a "religious leader". Rajiv Gandhi may have forgotten what he said many months ago, but if there ever was a duo that helped start the Khalistan baze, it is the mother-and-son combo of Mrs Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

Bhindranwale was used as a pawn by Mrs Gandhi. How that wretched man turned the tables on the lady is now ancient history. The Opposition then was nowhere in the picture. If anyone is responsible for providing the fundamentalists a 'goal', it is Mrs Gandhi—and no one else. We tend to forget the past. And those who forget the past have no future. By that same token Rajiv Gandhi has a vested interest in keeping the conspiracy theory alive. Only then can he project himself both as the victim of a conspiracy and a saviour of the nation. Rajiv Gandhi is trying to evoke a new sympathy wave. He will fail even as his mother failed.

Rajiv Gandhi, prior to Mrs Gandhi's assassination, was no friend or admirer of R.K. Dhawan. Nor, for that matter, was Arun Nehru, about whom more anon. When the news of the assassination broke, Rajiv Gandhi and his cousin Arun Nehru were in Calcutta. Both of them flew post-haste to the capital where Arun Nehru literally forced President Giani Zail Singh to swear in Rajiv Gandhi as the prime minister ad interim.

Soon after Rajiv Gandhi was sworn in R.K. Dhawan resigned. It is immaterial whether Dhawan was forced to resign or volunteered to do so. If Gandhi had that

much faith and confidence in his mother's confidants, he would have retained Dhawan, no matter what the whispers were. He didn't. Dhawan went two miles.

We are now told that the evil genius behind this was Arun Nehru. The question may be asked: didn't Rajiv Gandhi have a mind then? Why did he acquiesce in the banishment of Dhawan? Was he so weak-minded that he could be pushed around by an executive of a multinational company?

We are then being told that it was Arun Nehru, a latter-day Machiavelli, who asked Rajiv Gandhi to name Justice Thakkar to investigate the murder. We are further being told that Justice Thakkar was another weak-minded man ever-willing to take orders from Nehru who wanted Dhawan to be "axed". Presuming this is true—and we will come to that again—why did Gandhi go along with it? Why didn't he appoint a "less malleable" judge to inquire into the assassination? Or would he plead ignorance of Nehru's alleged designs?

If we presume that Justice Thakkar was not a fair-minded man, why, in heaven's name, was he appointed to the Fairfax Commission and then, wonder of wonders, to the Law Commission, other than which there is no more prestigious body? If Thakkar is not to be believed on the Dhawan case, how can one believe him in any other situation? And what does it say about our Supreme Court of which Thakkar is an honourable member? Was Thakkar appointed to the Supreme Court by the Opposition? If Thakkar is now considered to be a man who is "malleable" and amenable to suggestions, how can the country tolerate his continuation on the Bench? But Singh and his goodly company have that to answer. The Thakkar report was submitted several months ago to the government. Justice Thakkar was assisted in his closed door investigations by Anandram. Obviously it was the information provided

# IN SHEER PANIC

by Anandram that led Justice Thakkar to declare that "the needle of suspicion" pointed towards R.K. Dhawan. Anandram surely was aware of the contents of the Thakkar report, if he believed that Justice Thakkar was on the wrong track, did he protest or give a dissenting opinion?

The ones of wishing to keep the Thakkar report secret was placed on the able shoulders of Thakkar himself. But if Rajiv Gandhi did not believe a word of the report, then why wasn't his displeasure made public then? The fact that the report was then accepted leads one to the belief however unjustified, that Gandhi had something to hide. That R.K. Dhawan was taken back into service only after the two men found guilty of murdering Mrs Gandhi had been bagged, makes the situation even more suspicious. Or, perhaps, Gandhi is not aware of that?

If Anandram who had worked closely with Justice Thakkar was party to the Thakkar report, why was he then asked to head a Special Investigation Team to go deeper into the matter? Was he, perchance, ordered to give a contrary report, exonerating R.K. Dhawan? If there were doubts in Rajiv Gandhi's mind about the validity of the Thakkar report, he should have asked some one other than Anandram to head the Special Investigation Team. This was not done, adding to the suspicions already in existence that if, originally, Thakkar was used to damn Dhawan, Anandram was used to exonerate the latter. In neither case does justice seem to have been done. Have we reached a stage when government agencies are used to manipulate justice?

Rajiv Gandhi now promises to probe into the Thakkar report leak. Even before the probe has begun, the "needle of suspicion" is pointed at Arun Nehru. According to Gandhi, "Someone had betrayed the will of Parliament, breached the trust reposed in him; violated his oath of secrecy and has been a traitor to his word." These are strong words. It indicates the depth of hatred that Gandhi entertains for one who has been "a traitor to his word". But whatever the findings of the CBI which has been entrusted with probing the man who leaked the story, will anyone believe the new report. If the report of an impartial judge of the Supreme Court is not to be trusted, how can we trust the report of a government body?

If one can suppose that a Supreme Court judge's arms can be twisted, why not the arms of a CBI investigator? It is to this sorry state that Gandhi has reduced

the country. For all one knows the CBI will be told to name an individual who will then be duly named. Circumstantial evidence against the individual will be piled up and he will be named a 'traitor'; the Congress majority will then be used to drive the alleged traitor out of Parliament and penalise him from standing for elections for another five years. It will be Rajiv Gandhi's vindictiveness in ex-  
-ults.

This vindictiveness, reminiscent of Sanjay Gandhi, has been aimed so far at three persons: Ramnath Goenka, Ram Jethmalani and Arun Nehru. They have become Gandhi's *hate persons* not his dangerous obsessions. Gandhi has done his damndest to harm them through a variety of assaults, verbal, physical and quasi-legal. Income-tax sleuths were sent to harass the *Indian Express*. Congress goondas were sent to demolish Ram Jethmalani's residence in Delhi in the best style of Hitler's storm-troopers. And now Nehru is being called a traitor. If the presumption is that it was Nehru who leaked the Thakkar report to the *Indian Express*, who pray, leaked the same report to *India Today* in 1986? Why, one would want to know, wasn't the CBI asked to probe the leak in 1986? Because it wasn't in Gandhi's interest to find out the leak at that time?

If Nehru is made into a convenient scapegoat now, the question will be asked: what would not the prime minister stoop to, if he can wish to harm his own cousin? Harming Nehru now will inevitably set in motion the belief that Gandhi is capable of anything to gain his end. It is a dangerous and implicative conclusion to arrive at.

The record of the government is pretty poor. To the best of one's knowledge, *India Today's* disclosure of the Thakkar report in 1986 went unmentioned upon by the government. Why? When the same report was published in the *Indian Express* in March 1989, Buta Singh went to the extent of calling it "malicious and untrue". Buta Singh had to eat his words. On March 15 the Government of India refused to release the report; three days later it agreed to do so, proclaiming that the Special Investigation Team having cleared Dhawan, there would be no harm in making the Thakkar report public. The SIT's report, it was said on March 15, was not yet ready. If it was not ready after nearly four-and-a-half years, could it have been ready in two days? Who is fooling whom?



It is just possible that the so-called 'larger' conspiracy is Rajiv Gandhi's conspiracy to remain in power. In which case a fitting answer should be given to him during the elections. The 'larger' conspiracy is Rajiv Gandhi's last gamble. It is important that his bluff is called.

The *Indian Express* (April 12) has reported that according to SIT officials they had "exonerated" Dhawan some time in 1986-87. If that be so, is such an important matter as a prime minister's assassination, why was not the SIT's exoneration made public at once?

Consider what the establishment paper *The Times of India* says in this matter: Those in the intelligence and investigation arms of the government, whose ineptitude has led to such tardiness in proceeding with the trial, should not be allowed to go unpunished. Had the SIT completed its task well in time—considering that the charges against Simranjit Singh Mann are not new and Atinder Pal had been arrested in October last year—the government may not have had to face the allegation that it would have continued to prevaricate over the entire issue had the Thakkar report not been leaked. In the circumstances, rather than call the leaker a "traitor", the man who leaked the story should be thanked for rendering invaluable public service.

Then there is the *Economic Times* (April 12) which had roundly castigated the government for not doing its job. If one were to take the government's word about the conspiracy to destabilise India seriously, the *Economic Times* argued, "One is tempted to say that Mr Rajiv Gandhi's government had done precious little to unearth such an anti-national plot and run the conspirators to earth in all these four years."

The *Economic Times* added: To say the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has taken full four years to come to grips with the details of such a plot is to strain credibility, not to say anything of the efficiency with which such a life-and-death issue was investigated. If all that SIT has found out is material enough to charge these five more persons (of whom one is reported to be dead)... the manner in which our top-level investigating agencies go about their job leaves much to be desired. But suppose the fault is not that of the intelligence agencies? Where would the finger of secrecy point to?

We are told that five persons in all, including one who was

killed and one, SS Mann who was arrested on November 29, 1984, had conspired to do all manner of things like demolishing Parliament House, poisoning the sources of drinking water to cities, kidnapping the children of VVIPs etc.

Note that Mann was arrested in 1984; Rattan Singh, another co-conspirator was killed in 1985; a third Atinder Pal Singh was nabbed on October 4, 1988, and lodged in Sangrur jail. Accused number 4 and 5 are professors in Bombay colleges who have been under watch. To the best of one's knowledge these professors have not succeeded even in demolishing a hutment, let alone Parliament House. Besides, poison is not something that one buys in gunny bags like common salt to be dumped in lakes.

The charge-sheet against these wretches sounds impressive—but unconvincing. The 'larger conspiracy' trotted out by the SIT looks like a command performance and it has scared nobody. One suspects that it would probably have been sprung on an unsuspecting public say a month before the general elections, so that the Congress-I could say what a narrow crisis the country has

escaped and how Rajiv Gandhi has saved us all from death and demerition. The SIT charge-sheet apparently had to be predated, but considering the context in which it had to be released, it has lost its message.

Not even the *Hindustan Times*, another establishment paper has been convinced of the government's bona fides. In an editorial it rightly asked: 'Who should be believed—Thakkar or SIT?' If Thakkar is to be believed, Anandram should be sacked. If Anandram is to be believed, Thakkar should be relieved of all posts he presently holds. But the *Hindustan Times* says that even if Dhawan is innocent, his continuance in the job that has been given to him has become untenable. Quite true. Whatever verdict on him, it is bound to be difficult for Rajiv Gandhi to have Dhawan in a position of power. If nothing else, the Thakkar report has annihilated Dhawan's effectiveness. The best thing then he can do to serve the Nehru-Gandhi family is to resign.

Rajiv Gandhi is acting in sheer panic. He is flying his axes wildly and calling names. He is setting up goondas against his alleged enemies. The astounding statement has been made by Union Minister of State for Commerce Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi that "the conspiracy to kill former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was hatched by Simranjit Singh Mann in the state (West Bengal) with full knowledge of the Chief Minister Jyoti Basu". It is on par with the statements being made that Gandhi is keeping Dhawan in order to protect the true parties guilty of organis-

ing the assassination of Mrs Gandhi. K K Dhawan makes the same amount of the hatred and distrust that the late V K Krishna Menon evoked after the Indian debacle in the war with China. Nehru defended Krishna Menon until he could not defend him any more. Menon had to go. Dhawan has to go, if this country has to have peace. By defending Dhawan, Rajiv Gandhi has become a divisive force and of no use to the country in future. Win or lose, he will be despised.

There are now strong rumours that elections may be held on October 31, to evoke a fresh wave of sympathy for Rajiv Gandhi. That would be the most counter-productive step so far. The public will see through this gimmick. It has already seen through the 'larger conspiracy' gimmick and is laughing at it. How many of VVIP's children have so far been kidnapped, they ask. How many babies have been poisoned? Parliament House stands even now in all its majesty. Whatever killing has taken place, has occurred only in Punjab. And can it be said that whatever steps the government had taken in that unfortunate state has always been impeccably correct? Could two professors constantly under watch have done what they are supposed to have wanted to do?

It is just possible that the so-called 'larger conspiracy' is Rajiv Gandhi's conspiracy to remain in power, in which case a fitting answer should be given to him during the elections. The 'larger' conspiracy is Rajiv Gandhi's last gamble. It is important that his bluff is called.



CONTAINS NO FRUIT JUICE OR PULP



A man of scholarship, wisdom  
and humility

# Sardar Hukam Singh

A champion of Sikh causes

By : Prof. Saeik Singh Chawla

Sardar Hukam Singh played a very important role in the Sikh politics before and after the partition of Punjab. He did immense credit to the Sikhs by his conduct and behaviour during his long tenure as Deputy Speaker and Speaker of the Lok Sabha. By dint of his knowledge of the constitution, his sense of impartiality, his wit and humour, his calm and composed, he earned the respect of the members of Parliament and enjoyed the confidence of both the treasury benches and the opposition. He was always dignified but extremely humane.

It is gratifying that Sardar Pratap Singh has come up with a biography of Sardar Hukam Singh. Of course it would have been much better if Sardar Hukam Singh had written his own reminiscences in the form of his autobiography. He was a journalist and a scholar. But writer of this book tells us that being a gentleman he did not want to hurt, and felt that truth if expressed is bound to hurt politicians (not exposing them, of course, hurts the people). That would have made it possible for the Sikhs who are unfortunately never allowed to think objectively by demagogues disguised as leader to know that by accepting a high office a man does not become a traitor to his own community. The author of this biography has, however, done a good job by exposing such demagogues for whom politics is nothing more than agitation. Appeal to the raw emotions of the people

is the only instrument of political action for such politicians.

The author has presented an authentic picture of the life and achievements of Sardar Hukam Singh and highlighted the services which he so painstakingly rendered to the country and the Sikh community. He is correct when he says that an account of the life of Sardar Hukam Singh has to be an account of the various political movements which swayed the state of Punjab and affected the Sikh immediately after the partition of India and ever since. The focus is not on the personal life of this great Sikh leader but on the role that he played in public life. As a result there is no slander mongering, no mud slinging, on the opponents, no undue exposure of the national idiosyncrasies of weaknesses, betrayals of the different politicians with whom Sardar Hukam Singh came into contact. Where such an exposure is there, it is subdued and in the nature of a passing reference. Even those leaders who occupied high positions and unjustly opposed the legitimate demands for Panjabi Suba have been let off lightly. This attitude on the part of the writer and the restraint that he had displayed, is not only in keeping with the sense of good taste, but also harmonious with the dignified restrained personality of Sardar Hukam Singh who was unlike the ordinary run of Sikh politicians who feel that lung power is a substitute for integrity and consistency and agitation is a sub-

stitute for well considered policy and discipline. The desire to be in the limelight is the bane and end of all their political ambitions.

It is an oddity that the writer of the book has made just a passing reference to the "Spokesman Weekly" which has been in existence for 37 years and which was founded by Sardar Hukam Singh to espouse Sikh cause and to counter anti-Sikh propaganda by politicians and the press.

For those of us who wish to understand the genesis of present Punjab problem, this book will be quite illuminating and instructive. The Punjab crisis is a crisis of confidence. Suspicion and mutual distrust swayed the minds of all types of politicians in decades before and after the partition of the country. The communal politicians in various political parties distorted political perceptions. Petty politicians clamoured for communal domination and used language and religion as instruments for their nefarious activities.

In retrospect it is obvious to all that both the Hindu and Sikh communalists have harmed the interests of their respective communities and hindered the process of national integration. Sardar Hukam Singh has pointed out quite correctly, that the things would have been different, if the national leaders had displayed foresight and tried to win the confidence of the Sikhs instead of keeping electoral considerations to the fore.

Similarly, if the Akalis under the leadership of Master Tara Singh and the Hindu communalists had not hindered the working of the regional formula, the formation of the Panjabi Suba would have not been inevitable. The regional formula would have proved more beneficial to all concerned.

Another inference which we can draw from the reading of this biography is that for the achievement of political objectives, passion and agitation as instruments of political action should be sparingly used.

These were the last words of Sardar Hukam Singh to the author:—

"I have always preferred the interests of Panth and in this regard I have never erred knowingly or unknowingly... whatever the people may think and say. I am leaving the world with a clean conscience."

Sardar Hukam Singh was absolutely loyal to the Sikh interest. He was however not a mere politician. He was a statesman who could foresee the shape of things to come and shape a lasting and beneficial policy. He was a man of integrity and sharp intelligence. He had the firm conviction that the Sikhs had the right to preserve their cultural and religious identity. And that



Sardar Hukam Singh with his wife, Sardarni Triptal Kaur at Raj Bhawan, Jaipur

their political interest should be safeguarded under constitution. He played meaningful meditative role in settling the problems created by the politically unwise stand of our politicians. When Sant Fateh Singh threatened self-immolation his advice to the revered leader was:

"The wise make greater use of restraint than enthusiasm. Deliberations are as important for the achievement of our aims as other methods. Correct thinking and correct direction secure success."

He had his reservations regarding the Akalis joining Sant Bhindranwale's agitation.

"The Akali leaders will lose the control of this agitation. The Sikhs will suffer heavily... Blood will flow. Their prestige will go down. This is harmful for a minority like Sikhs. The Sikhs will be defamed and branded traitors and anti-national. They will be called separatists. Hindus will become hostile to them. As a consequence Sikhs will be massacred."

Every word of Sardar Hukam Singh has proved to be correct. We must be thankful to Sardar Pratap Singh for recording this well intentioned warning by a Sikh statesman. But can our politicians learn anything from the recent history?

**"JIWANI SARDAR HUKAM SINGH (in Punjab) by Pratap Singh, M.A.; Kendri Singh Sabha, Gurdwara Rakab Gani, New Delhi; pages 189; price Rs. 30/-**



Sardar Hukam Singh at the Singh Sabha Satnadi Committee premises held at Chandigarh in 1973.



**Letters to  
the Editor**

## Fractured polity in Punjab

Sir,—There is a certain bitter irony in the spectacle of Mr Rajiv Gandhi mounting a crusade for revival of Panchayati Raj, even going to the trouble of precipitating a constitutional amendment, and, within the space of the same week, the Home Minister, Sardar Bata Singh, piloting a resolution that determinedly snuffs out all hopes of restoring parliamentary democracy in Punjab. If the fractured polity in Punjab can be reason enough to perpetuate Central rule, the analogy could be extended to the terms of the present Lok Sabha, some December 1989.

As adviser to the Governor of Assam in 1982-83, I recall how the then Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, agonised over the disturbed situation but nevertheless opted for election to the State Assembly rather than extend President's rule via a constitutional amendment despite the fact that the AASU—Assam Gana Parishad agitation threatened to quash the pitch.

Sardar Bata Singh is reported to have told Parliament on May 9 that President's rule was the only way to a "committed and strong" administration in the State. The colonial British government had advanced similar argument ("we stand between order and chaos") at the time of the communal strife in the 1940s. Central rule in Punjab is a euphemism for paramilitary dictatorship. The State budget for

1989-90 allocates over 33 per cent resources to the upkeep of the security forces apparatus. Administration is virtually run by the police—from governor's adviser down to the all powerful SHO. The Governor's self-serving report trots out bizarre statistics of killing of terrorists and incarceration of 7,300 suspects—statistics which you chose to quote uncritically, ignoring the fact that in Punjab the police—not the judiciary—determines who is a "terrorist" and a "harbinger" and who should be liquidated and locked up without further ado. The courts have been marginalised and the time-honoured principle of Hindu-Sikh parity in the key personnel at the State secretariat and district headquarters is observed in the breach. The so-called grievance cells are police outfits. It is indeed the first time in free India that killing by police has been legalised and the official media have made a business of counting corpses and spreading fear psychosis by quoting aggregative crime figures of the State in daily bulletins.

The overriding issue in Punjab is not terrorism but human rights. What the people need today is a representative government and restoration of the rule of law. To ignore these objective considerations is to court disaster and jeopardise stability.

—Saran Singh, J.A.S. (Retd)  
Calcutta

## Anandpur Sahib Resolution

Sir,—There is an old adage that "every thing is fair in love and war". Since sometime it has been noticed that unusual coverage is being given to the ruling party on the television. If the extraneous statements of the prime minister who is also the Congress (I) president, made at party's and other governmental functions and frequently telecast are taken in that proverbial spirit one does not mind, otherwise in all fairness Opposition should also be given a chance to express their viewpoints freely and fearlessly. But regrettably the Opposition is being totally ignored in this respect.

I was utterly dismayed to note that the prime minister has again started playing the same old card of Anandpur Sahib Resolution depicting it as identical to the Muslim League resolution of 1940. In a statement Sardar Bhatnagar had recently clarified the position in regard to the interpretation of certain objectionable clauses of the said resolution. It is utterly a wrong and fallacious assumption that 'Khalistan' is the

demand of the Sikhs.

In clause 8.1 of the Punjab Accord it was clearly clarified that this resolution was entirely within the framework of the Constitution and it had only attempted to define the concept of Centre-state relations in a manner which was bringing out the true federal characteristics of our unitary Constitution, and the purpose of the resolution was to provide greater autonomy to the state with a view to strengthening the unity and integrity of the country. The denial has had been declared from the house-tops by every Sikh leader, religious or political, of accredited status. It is mischievous to harp on this string time and again.

It has been vehemently clarified by the Akali leaders that the Resolution has no resemblance at all with the Muslim League Resolution of 1940, which demanded a separate sovereign state, whereas according to the Anandpur Sahib Resolution the demand was a greater provincial autonomy and the departments of

Foreign Affairs, Currency, Communications and Defence Services had to be under the Centre's domain.

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution has never pleaded for any sovereign status. Under these circumstances Mr. Gandhi has absolutely no justification to repeatedly equate this resolution with that of the Muslim League resolution of 1940.

On the 12th of April while addressing Congress (I) men at Shimla Mr. Gandhi had referred to the said resolution and compared it with the Muslim League resolution, tarnishing it to be embodying Sikh community's demand for 'Khalistan'.

This statement was repeated

by the Sikh leaders. But it did not end there. Again to our utter dismay the prime minister spoke on the same subject while addressing a congregation at Patna, and this speech was telecast at T.V. during the news announcement.

After all what can possibly be the motive of referring to the said resolution time and again. It can be nothing else than maligning the Sikhs and playing the Sikh card again during the coming elections. It would be most unfair to the Sikhs and detrimental to the interest of unity and integrity of the country.

—G.S. Chahla, Advocate

New Delhi

## The Sikh Card

Sir,—Your issue dated 1st May 1989 deserves appreciation. Your front page, leader and articles of four non-Sikh eminent writers are of special significance particularly to the Sikhs.

The Sikh Card was most mercifully played by the ruling party during 1984 elections. The heinous and barbaric crimes perpetrated on thousands and thousands of innocent Sikhs were shrouded behind a perverted interpretation of Anandpur Sahib resolution. Sikhs were dubbed as piece of villain every where to corner Hindu votes. With the approach of general elections, the same card is brandished again. The tenor of speeches of prime minister during the last few weeks have shown marked anti-Sikh intonations. This has been well stated in your leader.

Mr. M.V. Kamath, Mr. A.G. Noorani and Mr. Don Morris in their scholarly articles have explained the vile efforts of sowing dragons teeth in this country and warned against its harvest. They, with their noble sensibilities, have reacted to the fact that something mischievous is afoot again.

However it is shameful that Sikh leaders, Sikh MPs and the like, who are more concerned with these happenings are almost keeping mum. It appears that their sensibilities are blocked. Because Sikh leaders, MPs, intellectuals are behaving as morons, prime minister is encouraged to say anything against Sikhs and get away with it.

A few points brilliantly brought out in these articles are explained again.

Punjab terrorism is a creation of the ruling party. Akalis and Bants, with their limited visions, were exploited by the ruling party for its own nefarious purpose. The same party is now encouraging Gurbaksh terrorism, Bodo terrorism etc to give throw the non Congress state governments.

As Punjab terrorism went out of control of the ruling party so they are crushing it with atrocious severity, instead of finding a solution to it. Youngsters who

have witnessed their near and dear ones put to barbaric indignities and death are to be won over with understanding and not by bullets. Moreover militants feel that they have the moral blessings of the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, who stated that Sikhs would have the right to pick up the sword if the assurances to the community are not fulfilled by the government.

Sikhs are pained again and again as communal. Any body, who is even remotely acquainted with Sikh faith, will find that it is based on equality, fraternity, brotherhood of mankind and fatherhood of one God. It is a universal religion, whose doors are open to all castes and creeds without any distinction.

An important fact which is often forgotten, is that in the recent Hindu Sikh communal riots there is not a single case where Sikh mobs have gone on a killing spree inspired by provocation.

In Congress ruled states stopping of a bus or shooting of slogans by Sikh militants is enough to incite mobs in city after city to destroy Sikh lives and properties. Jammu province H.P. are recent examples.

Further during actions of Sikh shooting e.g. Operation Bluestar, encounters with militants, raids on Sikh villages, it is invariably Sikh senior army and Sikh police officers who have been performing these wicked acts. It is known that they inflict many times more casualties on their co-religionists to please their masters. But the great irony is that Sikhs are still dubbed communal by the ruling party, whose actions smack of Hindu fundamentalism. One has to look at the behaviour and conduct of ministers at different ceremonies and the honours from TV and Radio to see the hollow-ness of the so 'called secularism of the ruling party.

Your action is a ray of hope in the otherwise dismal affairs of Sikh society in general.

—Brij Tarbakh Singh  
Chandigarh (Retd)



# Nehru as leader of the House

By : Sardar Surjit Singh Minhas, Speaker, Punjab Vidhan Sabha

The year 1959 is being celebrated as the Nehru Birth Centenary Celebration year. Pandit Nehru is known as the Father of Parliamentary Democracy in India. When he became the Prime Minister of free India, he was 51 years' old. He remained the Prime Minister and leader of the House in the Lok Sabha for about 17 years, till his death in 1964.

Pandit Nehru had his education in England and as such he was highly influenced by the language, culture and system of Government of that country. British Parliament is considered to be the mother of all Parliaments. The concept of modern democracy had come into vogue in that country since 18th century. Pandit Nehru had deep faith in the concept of Parliamentary system of Government. He was basically a democrat at heart. We will vividly remember one of the instances which occurred during his visit to Italy when Benito Mussolini was the dictator of that country. During Shri Nehru's visit, it is said that he was invited by Mussolini to see him but Nehru declined. He hated fascism and Nazism.

Pandit Nehru played an outstanding role in building our parliamentary system and establishing healthy practices and precedents. As a true democrat Pandit Nehru promoted free and frank discussion on all subjects which came before the Houses of Parliament. Pandit Nehru never relished withholding of any information from Members of Parliament on the excuse of public interest. He was always anxious to involve Parliament in the evolution, determination and the evaluation of national policy.

The Leader of the House is an important parliamentary functionary and exercises direct influence on the course of business in the House. He is supposed to be responsible not only to the Government and his party-men in the House but to the Opposition and even to the House as a whole. He is required to be tolerant, submissive and receptive to criticism in the House. He is also required to be respectful to the Chair as well as to the Leader of the Opposition. Pandit Nehru had all these qualities in him. He used to appreciate constructive criticism from all quarters and to listen with great interest and patience the view-point of the opposition benches. He had a belief that constructive and healthy criticism would be most helpful in implementing the policies more democratically.

Pandit Nehru had a pleasant

rapport with the Opposition Leaders of his times. He had highest regard for one of his great opponents in Parliament, namely Dr. Bhanu Prasad Mookerjee, the founder of Jan Sangh. How much considerate and friendly Pandit Nehru was towards his political adversaries can be well illustrated from the fact that when Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia was in Jail, Pandit Nehru sent him some baskets of mangoes as a token of friendship. Nehru used to meet the Opposition Leaders occasionally to exchange ideas on crucial issues. He had most cordial and friendly relations with the Opposition. He was loved and respected by all sections of the Opposition in the Houses of Parliament because of his unfailing courtesies and considerations to them.

Panditji was always conscious of the fact that he was the Prime Minister of the country and the leader of the whole House and not merely the leader of the majority party in Parliament. Pandit Nehru always stood for safeguarding the dignity and prestige of the House. He was always jealous of the powers of the House and didn't like any one to limit the powers of the House.

Under Nehru's leadership, the rights and privileges of Members were jealously safeguarded. In 1957 some Members from the Opposition felt that certain remarks made by Mr. M.O. Mathai, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, were a contempt of the House and they brought a privilege motion against him. Pandit Nehru himself rose to request the Speaker that the

matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

He said :-

"When a considerable section of the House was feeling that something should be done, it is hardly a matter for a majority to override those wishes... suggestion to drop this matter would, I think, not be a right one because it almost appears that an attempt was made some how to hush matters or hide matters. It is not a good thing for such an impression to be created".

Pandit Nehru had a great quality in him that he always outspokenly admitted his errors and confessed that 'to err is human'. In 1959 during discussion in regard to Indo-China relationship, the Opposition vehemently criticised Mr. Nehru for his acts of omission and commission in the past. He was asked by the Opposition benches as to why the House did not know about the building up of a road by China across Yeh Ching in North-East corner of Ladakh. Pandit Nehru promptly admitted it as a relevant question and tried to explain reasons as to why he did not bring the matter before the House. Without hesitation he clarified that it was possibly an error or a mistake on his part not to have brought the facts before the House.

Pandit Nehru used to partake in the debates and proceedings of the Parliament to the maximum possible extent. He took the Parliament in all seriousness and was always very respectable to

"Nehru was one of the greatest figures of our generation, an outstanding statesman whose service to the cause of human freedom are unforgettable". On his death anniversary which falls on 27th May, our thoughts today go out to him as a great emancipator of the human race.

The Chair. As a leader of the House, Panditji had never any confrontation with the Chair. He always held the Chair in high esteem. Once Mr. N.G. Chatterjee, a member of the Lok Sabha, had made certain remarks in the House about the members of the Upper House which had earned a notice of privilege from the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. Pandit Nehru, somewhat annoyed, suggested that Mr. Chatterjee should go and apologise as a courteous gesture. But Mr. Mavalankar, the then Speaker, ruled that he could not be a party to the subordination of the Lok Sabha to the Rajya Sabha. It was a question of dignity of the Lok Sabha and Mr. Chatterjee was asked not to apologise. Pandit Nehru bowed before the wishes of the Chair.

On another occasion, Pandit Nehru wanted to make an important statement in the Lok Sabha which was not entered in the day's order. Mr. Mavalankar was in the Chair. Panditji stood up after question hour and sought permission to make a statement. Mr. Mavalankar, a strong Speaker as he was, refused to grant permission to make the statement as it was not included in the agenda of the day. Despite of Nehru's insistence, the Speaker did not change his ruling. Nehru had to yield and bow to the ruling of the Chair. He was allowed to make that statement on the subsequent day.

Pandit Nehru, whose birth centenary is being celebrated, always contributed a lot for building up a parliamentary system with profound democratic spirit. The parliamentary system and its institutions which we have today, evolving through the changing times, are indeed an integral part of great legacy left behind by our late Prime Minister, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

It will be a befitting tribute to the great democrat of the twentieth century, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, if we keep the legacy of democratic principles, traditions and precedents left by him, intact and put the same into practice in our behaviour and working in our legislatures and Parliament.



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# Why Khalistan Bogey ?

By : Lt. Col. Manohar Singh (Retd.)

After a long interval the bogey of Khalistan has again reappeared in the press. The heroes of Khalistan Dr Jagjit Singh Chauhan and Sardar Ganga Singh Dhillon have been forgotten long ago. But these heroes and their supporting characters are being revived back to life for the ill of the country, specially the Sikh community. Why and on whose initiatives ?

In the last month a Sikh convention was held at London in which many resolutions were passed including achieving the target of Khalistan and obtaining help from Pakistan.

The question before us is why the bogey of Khalistan is being given life and prominence, and to whose advantage at this juncture. When the fact has been clearly understood by the entire community that the Sikh community as such have never demanded a separate Sikh state or Khalistan, but have put up their certain demands through the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. This has been referred to Justice Sakaria Commission.

The Punjab accord between the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and late Sant Harmandir Singh Longowal had been drawn in the spirit of Anandpur Sahib Resolution. One thing more people must understand so that they can act judiciously, which will only help the cause of maintaining unity and integrity of the country and ensuring flow of good will for the over all happiness that the Sikh community is terribly worried about, the harmfulness of Khalistan, as it denies them the love and affection from their other countrymen and gives set back to their economic and religious prosperity in India and in foreign countries.

In this context, it will be appropriate to refer to the news published in 'Jang' on May 14, 89 that the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had warned Mr Benazir Bhutto that the Sikhs were plotting to kill her on Pakistan Day military parade on March 23, 1989. The question emerges, why the Sikhs would kill Ms Bhutto ? And, even if they did, would not it turn the entire Pakistan and its government against the Sikh community, which would hit on the very roots of terrorism in Punjab, which the country wants it. But from this act of our Prime Minister one cannot say whether the present government wants it, in view of the coming general election to derive full benefit out of it ?

Another basic point, which the public must analyse properly is to differentiate between a national character party or an organisation and a private political organisation - dynastic ruling one.

Mrs Indira Gandhi suffixed word (I) with Congress. And after

that many Congress parties became Congress (S) and Congress (R). Similarly Shiromani Akali Dal, has been broken into Akali Dal (I) (B) (T) and so on. These have acquired character of belonging to certain individual persons and have lost national character, which is only regained by parties like Janta Dal, Bharatiya Janta Party, Hindu Maha Sabha, Muslim League, RSS and Forward Block.

Therefore the present unrest and corruption prevailing at national level is the outcome of private parties being treated as national parties and being elected and put in power to change the destiny of the nation, being void of national interest and inhibited with party or individual interests.

It is being said that Congress (I) had based its election campaign in 1984 elections on the criticism of Anandpur Sahib Resolution, and on Indira Gandhi wave. A similar strategy is discernible now.

In addition to this there is likelihood of playing Pakistan, China and Nepal cards. But the public must be aware of the fact that these countries are facing economic crises, as much, none would be fool hardy to confront India to destabilise it. So, people should not get mesmerized with such a sentimental approach.

I would appeal to my community, specially the Sikh militants and the Sikh leadership to appreciate those forces which can restore the status of the community and discard those factors which have proved disastrous and would continue to be so in our interest.

This strategy would nullify the dubious designs of anti-Sikh forces. In view of this the first step should be taken collectively to stop the killings of innocent people irrespective of religion and prove that killing of Hindus

was not the act of Sikhs. All the weapons whether legal or illegal ones must be handed over to the government, so that no Sikh is killed under any pretext in fake police encounters.

Lastly under no circumstances even if police harassment and killing of the Sikhs continues should seek asylum or any other help or weapons to cater for their security. Once the non-Sikhs are convinced that there is no section of Sikh community is working for the Khalistan or responsible for the killing innocents, the public would see that this non-sense is totally stopped.

The Sikhs should appreciate that the killing of many Sikhs since Operation Bluestar have taken place. This terrible account of Sikh suffering and its adverse effect on the country seems to have stirred up the Hindu sympathetic mind towards the Sikhs. This is what Mr Manish Agarwal "Vidroh" in Indian Express of 2 May 1989 from Bombay says. "Is shooting down terrorists the proper solution to the problem? To know why a man becomes a terrorist is much more important than knowing how he can be killed. After all they are also people of our land. They are our youth."

I feel, if the steps suggested are implemented, the community would draw more and more sympathies, which would see early end to their agony. The struggle to obtain success to the Anandpur Sahib Resolution should remain non-violent, it might be patience taxing.

If the end, it would suffice to state that a common man must be cautioned regarding the dubious objectives of certain parties in playing various cards to their advantages, though it would be against the interest of the country, as it is bound to alienate the Sikh community from national mainstream.

## Punjab Newsletter

### A political stunt

By : A.S. Khanna, Chandigarh

The UAD (Mann) described the constitutional amendment to give more powers to the panchayats as a stunt.

A resolution passed at the meeting of the Presidium of the party in Jalandhar said that the Government, which was not giving more powers to the States, was not expected to give more powers to the panchayats.

Briefing newsmen on the deliberations at the meeting of the Presidium, Sardar Charanjit Singh Walia, General Secretary of the party, demanded the holding of the elections of the SGPC, the municipal committees and corporations along with the panchayats if it really wanted to step up the democratic process.

The party criticised the institution of a fresh case against Sardar Simranjit Singh Mann and others. Demanding his immediate release, it said that the party would submit a memorandum to the government signed by two million Sikhs to demand the unconditional release of Sardar Mann.

The party described as an election slogan the Jawahar Rozgar Yojna, would meet the fate of the "Garibi Hatao" programme.

### Vodka unit for Punjab

The Punjab Agro Industrial Corporation in collaboration with the United Breweries, Bangalore, will set up a Vodka wine manufacturing unit either in Bathinda or Jalandhar district at a cost of Rs 20 crore. Sardar Amrik Singh Pooni, Financial Commissioner, Punjab informed this to newsmen in Hoshiarpur.

He said sub-standard potatoes would be used for the brew which would be exported to foreign countries. The first unit of Pepsi Cola at Channowal village in Sangrur district would go in stream in September.

The foundation stone of the second unit of Pepsi Cola would be laid at Jahora village near Tanda in Hoshiarpur district.

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# Flats Allotted To Widows Of November 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots Must Be Given Free Of Cost

## Their Plight Is Much Worse Than That Of Refugees In Eastern States Who Were Given Relief Of Rs 165 Crores

Despite loud claims by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi about "unprecedented rehabilitation work" undertaken for victims of November 1984 anti-Sikh riots, the plight of the concerned widows remains indescribable.

And, to boot, they are being hounded and harassed and forced to dish out money for the flats allotted to them and this at a time when they can hardly make their both ends meet.

Efforts by several Sikh organisations like Nishkam Sikh Welfare Council and others, to make the Delhi administration see reason and treat the cases of these unfortunate women with sympathy and compassion have not borne fruit so far.

On May 23, at least 1300 riot victims families, "who have been neither settled nor provided any rehabilitation grants", marched to prime minister's house and staged a dharna near it.

On May 26 the All-India Sikh Conference (Babbar group) staged another march to Union Home Minister Bala Singh's residence. They protested against the "certificate of clearance" given to two Congress (I) prominent leaders in Delhi by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi for their role in November 1984 carnage.

If these protests fail to evoke a favourable response, they would march to the Golden Temple and then fan out into the countryside to highlight their "just demands".

Delhi Development Authority continues to send notices to these widows for payment of instalments for the accommodation given to them. The notices insist that the victims should sell their old houses and deposit the proceeds with the authorities for adjustment against cost of the flats allotted to them.

These victims were also refused, in initial stages, no objection certificates to enable them to get water and electricity connections. It was after great endeavour by numerous Sikh organisations that the authorities relented and agreed to grant NOCs to the widows who had "lost their earning members in the riots."

DDA declared that this was being done as the authorities did not want to "immediately cross an additional economic burden on them."

This thinking is laudable. But

its effect has been nullified by some heart-does shown in other matters, especially in forcible payment of instalments for cost of flats.

In 1987, the central government wrote off loans advanced to refugees and repatriates from Bangladesh into our eastern states.

The State governments, which had given loans on their own, were to be reimbursed by New Delhi. Mr Gandhi argued at that time that the central government, on review, considered that the refugees and the repatriates would probably be able to "build a better economic base for themselves" if they were relieved of the loan burden altogether.

And, as a result, loans of more than Rs 165 crores were written off, even though each of all these families had so many

earning members alive and kicking.

Here in case of 1,000 Sikh widows, the amount involved is just a paltry Rs 4 crores only, especially when each family has lost all earning members.

If the central government could easily write off a sum of Rs 165 crores for refugees and repatriates in eastern states, why cannot it display the same degree of magnanimity and write off loans of just Rs 4 crores in case of Sikh widows?

Reluctance to do so "build" men that New Delhi rule are treating these widows in a much worse manner, merely because they happen to belong to Sikh community.

Is this the type of secularism, about which Mr Gandhi bears his dream day and night?

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